

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 13945 01 OF 02 301856Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EA-06 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 ACDA-05 EB-07 TRSE-00 IO-10

/103 W

----- 124847

R 301841Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9948

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 13945 01 OF 02 301856Z

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY SANAA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION USUN
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
USCINCEUR
CINCLANT
CINCPAC
CINCPACFLT
CINCUSNAVEUR
COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 13945

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS MARR, XO, FR, US, UK
SUBJECT: FRENCH INTEREST IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

REF: (A) STATE 120815 (LONDON 7751); (B) PARIS 2657
(NOTAL)

1. PARAGRAPH 3 OF REF A INDICATES THAT THE MOTIVES
BEHIND THE RECENT INCREASE IN FRENCH INDIAN OCEAN
ACTIVITY WERE "OBSCURE" TO THOSE WHO TOOK PART IN LAST
WEEK'S U.S.-U.K. TALKS. A DESCRIPTION OF SOME OF THE
REASONS BEHIND THE GROWING FRENCH INTEREST IN THE REGION
WAS CONTAINED IN REF B, PERTINENT PORTIONS OF WHICH WE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 13945 01 OF 02 301856Z

QUOTE.

2. "FRANCE'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA DATES
FROM THE 17TH CENTURY FRENCH COLONIAL HOLDINGS IN THAT
OCEAN AND ALONG ITS PERIMETER. FRANCE HAS HISTORICALLY
SEEN THE COUNTRIES ALONG THAT OCEAN'S LITTORAL AS
POTENTIALLY IMPORTANT COMMERCIAL PARTNERS FOR FRENCH
EXPORTS OF FINISHED GOODS AND IMPORTS OF RAW MATERIALS,

AND THE INDIAN OCEAN AS THE COMMUNICATION LINK WITH
THESE AREAS. IT WAS NOT BY CHANCE THAT THE SUEZ CANAL--
WHICH OPENED THE INDIAN OCEAN TO MORE ECONOMICAL TRADE--
WAS LARGELY A FRENCH VENTURE.

3. FRANCE'S FASCINATION WITH THE INDIAN OCEAN REMAINS
STRONG TODAY, FOR REASONS GOING BEYOND THESE HISTORIC
COMMERCIAL AND COLONIAL TIES. THE KEY ROLE OF THE
MIDDLE EAST IN PROVIDING PETROLEUM TO EUROPE AND TO
FRANCE MAKES THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA (INCLUDING THE PERSIAN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PARIS 13945 02 OF 02 301859Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EA-06 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 ACDA-05 EB-07 TRSE-00 IO-10

/103 W

----- 124875

R 301841Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9949

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARIS 13945 02 OF 02 301859Z

AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY SANAA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USMISSION USUN
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
USCINCEUR
CINCLANT
CINCPAC
CINCPACFLT
CINCUSNAVEUR
COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 13945

GULF) A STRATEGICALLY CRITICAL AREA FOR THE SURVIVAL OF
FRANCE'S INDUSTRY NOW AND FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.
MOREOVER, THE INCREASED SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE
INDIAN OCEAN IS VIEWED BY SOME FRENCH LEADERS AS A
POTENTIAL THREAT TO THE SOURCES OF PETROLEUM, AS WELL AS
TO THE GENERAL STABILITY OF THE AREA (A STABILITY WHICH

THE GOF BELIEVES SERVES ITS INTERESTS).

4. IN RECENT YEARS, THE FRENCH HAVE DEMONSTRATED THEIR STRATEGIC INTEREST IN THE INDIAN OCEAN THROUGH TEMPORARY DEPLOYMENTS OF MAJOR FIGHTING SHIPS TO THAT AREA. MOST CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARIS 13945 02 OF 02 301859Z

RECENTLY, THE FRENCH TEMPORARILY DEPLOYED ONE OF THEIR TWO AIRCRAFT CARRIERS TO THE INDIAN OCEAN. WE EXPECT TO SEE THE LEVEL OF FRENCH NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS MAINTAINED AND PERHAPS INCREASED.

5. ADDITIONALLY, THE FRENCH MAINTAIN MILITARY BASES OF STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE AT DJIBOUTI, LA REUNION, AND DIEGO SUAREZ (THE LATTER IS BEING PHASED OUT). WE ARE TOLD THAT A RECENT MEETING OF FRANCE'S DEFENSE COUNCIL (SMALL GROUP OF SENIOR MINISTERS CHAIRED BY THE PRESIDENT AND DEALING WITH DEFENSE ISSUES) CONFIRMED THE CONTINUED IMPORTANCE OF DJIBOUTI AND RESISTED BUDGET CUTTERS WHO WISHED TO ECONOMIZE THE DEFENSE BUDGET BY REDUCING THAT BASE. AS FRANCE'S SSBN FLEET INCREASES IN NUMBERS AND MISSILE RANGE, THE INDIAN OCEAN MAY BECOME AN ATTRACTIVE AREA FOR FRENCH SSBN (AND SSN) DEPLOYMENTS AND PERHAPS BASING. FINALLY, THE REOPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL IS LIKELY TO MAKE THE INDIAN OCEAN AN EVEN MORE IMPORTANT ROUTE FOR FRENCH MERCANTILE AND MILITARY COMMUNICATION WITH THE EAST COAST OF AFRICA, THE SOUTHERN PORTION OF THE MIDDLE EAST, AND ASIA. THIS IS ONE OF THE REASONS BEHIND THE PLANNED MOVE OF FRANCE'S AIRCRAFT CARRIERS FROM THEIR BREST HOME PORT TO A NEW HOME PORT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, TOULON." RUSH

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, MEETINGS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, MILITARY POLICIES, INDIAN OCEAN
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PARIS13945
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750190-0127
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975055/aaaaaeaa.tel
Line Count: 259
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 120815, 75 (LONDON 775, 75 PARIS 2657
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <06 OCT 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRENCH INTEREST IN THE INDIAN OCEAN
TAGS: MARR, XO, FR, US, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006